

WEB  
OF  
MYSTERY

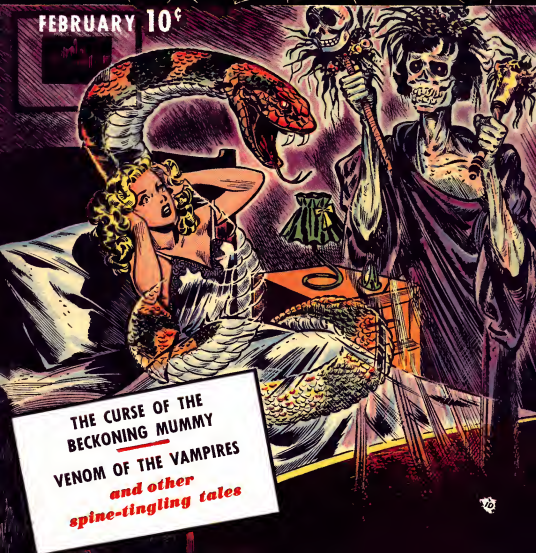
WEIRD! EERIE! STARTLING!

# WEB OF MYSTERY

ALL  
AGES

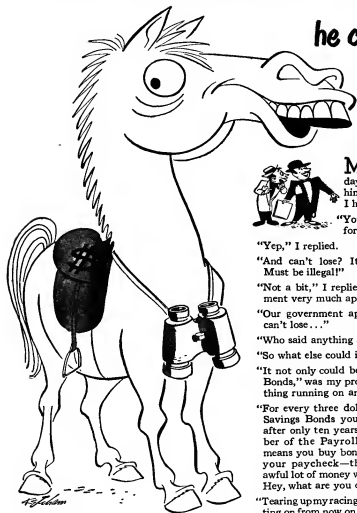
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FEBRUARY 10¢



THE CURSE OF THE  
BECKONING MUMMY  
VENOM OF THE VAMPIRES  
*and other  
spine-tingling tales*

# "There's no such animal," he cried!



MY FRIEND and I were picking the ponies one day when I started telling him about a *sure thing* I heard about.

"You say it pays four bucks for every three?" he asked.

"Yep," I replied.

"And can't lose? It *automatically* wins? Must be illegal!"

"Not a bit," I replied. "In fact, the government very much approves..."

"Our government approves of a horse who can't lose..."

"Who said anything about a horse?" I asked.

"So what else could it be but a horse...?"

"It not only could be—but is—U. S. Savings Bonds," was my prompt reply. "The surest thing running on any track today.

"For every three dollars you invest in U. S. Savings Bonds you get four dollars back after only ten years. And if you're a member of the Payroll Savings Plan—which means you buy bonds *automatically* from your paycheck—that can amount to an awful lot of money when you're not looking. Hey, what are you doing?"

"Tearing up my racing form! The horse I'm betting on from now on is U. S. Savings Bonds."

## Automatic saving is sure saving—U.S. Savings Bonds



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# The Case of the Beckoning Mummy

WELL, MY DARLING FIANCEE, HOW DO YOU LIKE EGYPT? YOU WON'T FIND ANY MORE COLORFUL SPOT THAN THE MARKET PLACE OF CAIRO!

IT'S WONDERFUL, DAMON... EVEN BETTER THAN YOU DESCRIBED! OH! LOOK AT THAT SIGN! LET'S GO IN AND HAVE OUR FORTUNES TOLD!

Fortune  
Teller

WHERE DOES THE DIVIDING LINE BETWEEN FACT AND FANCY EXIST? DID THE STRANGE OLD FORTUNE TELLER REALLY LIVE, OR WAS HE THE DISTURBED SPIRIT OF THE 8,000 YEAR OLD MUMMY OF KALI-DANN? OR WAS THIS WEIRD EXPERIENCE MERELY A CONJURED-UP PHANTASM OF DR. DAMON KNIGHT'S BEWILDERED MIND? WHO IS THERE TO DETERMINE?

MY GOODNESS! THEY COULD CERTAINLY USE SOME LIGHT IN HERE!

WELCOME TO MY HUMBLE QUARTERS!

THE LADY FIRST, EFFENDI. I SEE A HAPPY AND FRUITFUL LIFE FOLLOWING A SEVERE SHOCK AND SUDDEN LOSS OF A DEAR ONE!

WHO--WHO WILL IT BE?

OF THIS I CANNOT SPEAK, DEAR LADY! I CAN TELL NO MORE. NOW, IF THE GENTLEMAN WILL BE SEATED, I SHALL PROCEED!

THE OLD FORTUNE TELLER BECAME GRAVE AS HE PEERED INTO THE TRANSPARENT SPHERE...

YOU HAVE COME TO EGYPT ON A MISSION OF EVIL... AND UNLESS YOU ABANDON THIS MISSION, IT WILL RESULT IN A HORRIFYING DEATH!

WHAT? WHY, THAT'S RIDICULOUS!

I'M AN ARCHAEOLOGIST! I'VE COME TO EGYPT FOR THE PURPOSE OF UNEARTHING THE TOMB OF KING KALI-DAHN WHO DIED 8000 YEARS AGO. WHAT HARM CAN THERE BE IN THAT?

WAIT! THAT RING! WHERE DID YOU GET IT?

IT WAS TAKEN FROM THE TOMB OF THE SON OF KALI-DAHN ALMOST TEN YEARS AGO. LEGEND HAS IT THAT KALI-DAHN GAVE IT TO HIS SON FOR GOOD FORTUNE WHEN HE WOULD SUCCEED TO THE THRONE. WHY DO YOU ASK ABOUT IT?

I CANNOT TELL! AND NOW YOU MUST GO.

I'M WORRIED, DAMON. THAT OLD MAN DIDN'T SOUND LIKE HE WAS JUST MAKING IT UP!

OH, BOSH, KAREN! WHAT HARM COULD AN 8000 YEAR OLD RING POSSIBLY DO?

BACK AT THEIR HOTEL...

I STILL CAN'T SHAKE OFF A STRANGE FEELING OF FOREBODING!

YOU'RE TIRED. BETTER GET A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP! WE'VE A LOT OF WORK TOMORROW!

LATER, AFTER HE HAD FALLEN ASLEEP, A STRANGE PHENOMENON TOOK PLACE IN DAMON KNIGHT'S ROOM, AS THE ANCIENT RING TOOK ON A PHOSPHORESCENT GLOW...

... AWAKEN, DR. DAMON KNIGHT!  
AWAKEN AND HEED MY WARNING!

WHO'S  
THERE?  
WHO  
ARE  
YOU?



I'VE COME TO WARN YOU ONCE MORE DR. KNIGHT.  
YOU MUST NOT DESECRATE THE TOMB OF KALI-  
DAHN... FOR THE PENALTY  
IS DEATH!

YOU! THE FORTUNE  
TELLER! THE RING!  
WHAT IS THE RING  
TO YOU?



THE RING WAS ONCE MINE! I GAVE IT TO MY SON!  
BUT NOW I MUST LEAVE! I FEEL THE PRESENCE  
OF AN INTRUDER!

HIS SON! BUT THAT WOULD  
MAKE HIM THE SPIRIT  
OF KALI-DAHN... BUT HE'S  
THE FORTUNE TELLER!



IN JUST AS WEIRD A MANNER AS IT APPEARED,  
THE APPARITION SUDDENLY TOOK FLIGHT...

DAMON! ARE  
YOU ALL RIGHT?  
I HEARD VOICES!

OF COURSE I'M ALL RIGHT,  
KAREN. I JUST HAD A FUNNY  
DREAM. MUST'VE BEEN  
TALKING IN MY SLEEP.



BUT I HEARD TWO  
VOICES... NOT JUST  
YOURS ALONE!  
DAMON! WHAT'S  
THAT ON THE  
FLOOR?

ON THE  
FLOOR?  
WHERE?



MUMMY WRAPPINGS!  
I DON'T UNDERSTAND  
IT! HOW...?

DAMON! I'M  
FRIGHTENED!  
WHAT DOES  
IT MEAN?





I DON'T KNOW WHAT IT MEANS, DEAR... BUT YOU'D BETTER GO BACK TO YOUR ROOM AND GET SOME SLEEP. WE'RE HEADING FOR THE INTERIOR EARLY TOMORROW MORNING, AND THERE'S SOMEONE I MUST SEE BEFORE WE LEAVE.



*RIISING EARLY, DAMON VISITED THE MARKET PLACE AGAIN...*

I'VE GOT TO KNOW WHAT'S BEHIND ALL THIS. AND ONLY THAT FORTUNE TELLER CAN TELL ME. THERE'S HIS TENT... BUT... THAT'S FUNNY! IT'S ALL CHANGED!



BUT I KNOW OF NO FORTUNE TELLER, EFFENDI. I HAVE OCCUPIED THIS SHOP FOR MANY YEARS AS MY FATHER DID BEFORE ME. PERHAPS I CAN INTEREST YOU IN SOME SHAWLS.



BUT I SAW HIM HERE... JUST YESTERDAY AFTERNOON!

WE COULDN'T HAVE BEEN JUST A FIGMENT OF MY IMAGINATION! KAREN WAS WITH ME. SHE SAW HIM, TOO! AND WHAT OF MY DREAM LAST NIGHT? OR WAS IT A DREAM?



*LATE THAT AFTERNOON, MANY MILES IN THE INTERIOR...*

DAMON! STOP UNLOADING! A BIG SANDSTORM IS BLOWING UP! GET EVERYONE INTO THE TENTS!

RIGHT, DR. DEMBROW!



*IN A FEW MOMENTS, ALL THE MEMBERS OF THE EXPEDITION WERE SAFELY IN DAMON'S TENT...*

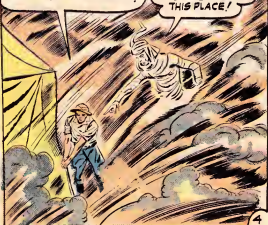
LOOK THERE! ONE OF THE MOORINGS MUST'VE COME LOOSE!

I'D BETTER GET OUT THERE AND FIX IT BEFORE THE WHOLE TENT BLOWS AWAY!



HANG IT! I CAN HARDLY SEE WHAT I'M DOING IN THIS SWIRLING SAND... WHA...?

DR. KNIGHT... THIS IS MY LAST WARNING! YOU MUST LEAVE THIS PLACE!



I DON'T KNOW WHO OR WHAT YOU ARE, BUT I'M NOT LEAVING!

YOU MUST NOT DESECRATE THE TOMB OF KALI-DAHN! YOUR FATE LIES IN YOUR DECISION... YOU HAVE BEEN WARNED! NOW I GO!

THE STORM HAS DIED DOWN. LET'S FINISH UNLOADING. WE START DIGGING TOMORROW MORNING!

FINE! IF MY CALCULATIONS ARE CORRECT, THE TOMB IS UNDER THAT LARGE DUNE... AND WE SHOULD REACH THE ENTRANCE BY TOMORROW AFTERNOON!

BUT EARLY THE NEXT MORNING, AS DAMON FINISHED DRESSING...

THAT'S STRANGE! I LEFT MY RING RIGHT HERE LAST NIGHT, AND NOW IT'S GONE! MUST'VE BEEN ONE OF THOSE THIEVING NATIVES! OH, WELL, GOOD RIDDANCE TO THE RING AND THAT BLASTED IMAGE!



BENEATH A BROILING EGYPTIAN SUN, THE HIRED NATIVES DUG LABORIOUSLY FOR HOURS. THEN, THAT AFTERNOON...

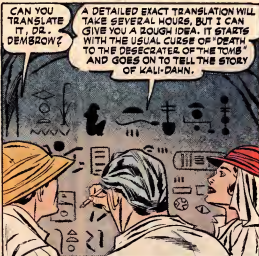


DAMON! THE ENTRANCE! WE'VE FOUND IT! DR. DEMBROW IS DECIPHERING THE HIEROGLYPHS NOW!

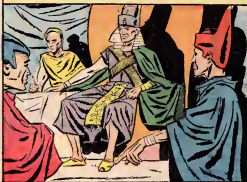
WONDERFUL! I'LL BE RIGHT THERE!

CAN YOU TRANSLATE IT, DR. DEMBROW?

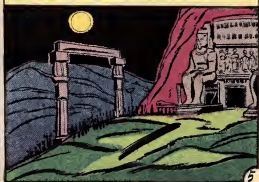
A DETAILED EXACT TRANSLATION WILL TAKE SEVERAL HOURS, BUT I CAN GIVE YOU A ROUGH IDEA. IT STARTS WITH THE USUAL CURSE OF "DEATH TO THE DESECRATER OF THE TOMB" AND GOES ON TO TELL THE STORY OF KALI-DAHN.



"KALI-DAHN WAS A KING OF UNUSUAL CAPACITIES AND WISDOM. UNDER HIS RULE, EGYPT EXPERIENCED AN ERA OF GREAT WEALTH AND PROSPERITY. AT 60, HIS COURT PHYSICIANS GAVE HIM A SHORT TIME TO LIVE, BUT HE DISPROVED THEIR THEORIES AND OUTLIVED ALL OF THEM."



"WHEN KALI-DAHN DIED AT THE AMAZING AGE OF 133, HE RECEIVED ONE OF THE MOST FABULOUS FUNERALS EVER BESTOWED ON AN EGYPTIAN RULER. HIS SUPERSTITIOUS FOLLOWERS BELIEVED THAT, SINCE HE'D LIVED A DOUBLE LIFETIME, ANOTHER LIFE WOULD HAVE TO BE FORFEIT, IN ORDER TO APPEASE THE GODS FROM WHOM HE TOOK THIS TIME!"





YOU MEAN A SACRIFICE WHOSE LIFE WAS TAKEN?

NO ONE'S... YET! IT SAYS THAT THE LIFE OF THE FIRST PERSON TO DESECRATE THE TOMB WILL BE FORFEIT! DO YOU WANT THIS DOOR OPENED, DAMON?



YES! I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR THIS MOMENT!

GOOD! YOU MEN... OVER THERE! BRING THE TOOLS! WE'RE GOING TO REMOVE THE DOOR!



AFTER AN HOUR OF HEAVY WORK, THE MASSIVE SLAB WAS FINALLY REMOVED, REVEALING A DREARY CORRIDOR...

YOU'RE HEAD OF THIS EXPEDITION, DAMON. THE PRIVILEGE OF FIRST ENTRY IS YOURS!

LOOK THERE! WHAT'S THAT SHINY THING... ON THE FLOOR?



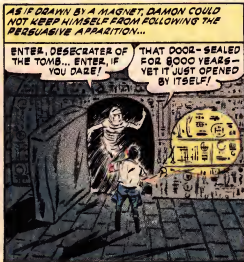
WHY... IT'S MY MISSING RING! BUT HOW...? THAT DOOR HADN'T BEEN OPENED IN 8,000 YEARS!



THAT NIGHT, AS DAMON SLEPT FITFULLY, THE PHANTOM OF THE RING APPEARED ONCE MORE...

WHO'S THERE? OH, IT'S YOU! IF YOU'VE COME TO WARN ME AGAIN...

ARISE, DR. KNIGHT! IF YOU WOULD SEE KALI-DAHN'S SARCOPHAGUS IN THE INNER CHAMBER OF THE TOMB, ARISE AND COME WITH ME NOW!



AS IF DRAWN BY A MAGNET, DAMON COULD NOT KEEP HIMSELF FROM FOLLOWING THE PERSUASIVE APPARITION...

ENTER, DESECRATER OF THE TOMB... ENTER, IF YOU DARE!

THAT DOOR—SEALED FOR 8,000 YEARS—YET IT JUST OPENED BY ITSELF!



BUT AS DAMON ENTERED THE FORBIDDEN CHAMBER, HE WAS HORRIFIED TO SEE A CHANGE OCCUR IN THE APPARITION!

OH! WHAT DO YOU WANT? GET AWAY!





THE END

# TRUE CREEPY TALES

#1

THE LEGEND SAYS THAT AN INDIAN BRAVE, WHILE PADDLING ACROSS THE LAKE TO MEET HIS SWEETHEART, WAS SLAIN BY A JEALOUS SUITOR! THE DISTRACTED MAIDEN FLUNG HERSELF INTO THE LAKE, FOLLOWING HER LOVER TO HIS WATERY GRAVE! EVEN TODAY, IT IS SAID, A SPECTRAL CANOE WITH A SHADOWY PADDLER IS SOMETIMES SEEN TO GLIDE OVER THE LAKE AT MIDNIGHT. IT IS THE FRENZIED LOVER SEARCHING FOR, BUT NEVER FINDING, THE DROWNED FORM OF HIS BETROTHED!

WE MAY LAUGH AT THE THOUGHT OF GHOSTS. THAT'S WHAT THE YOUNG SMITHS, WHO WERE SPENDING THEIR HONEYMOON IN MASSACHUSETTS, DID! THEY LAUGHED WHEN THEY HEARD THE "GHOST STORY" OF POONTOSUC LAKE, AN INDIAN NAME MEANING "PLACE OF WINTER DEER"!



I WISH YOU TWO WOULDN'T GO CANOEING THIS TIME OF NIGHT!

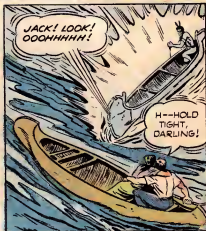
IT'S MORE ROMANTIC THAN EVER AFTER THAT LEGEND YOU TOLD US, UNCLE BEN!

A LOT OF MIDNIGHT PADDLERS HAVE CAP-SIZED AND DROWNED WHEN THE WATER WAS THE SMOOTHEST! THOSE THAT WERE SAVED SAID THEY WERE TURNED OVER BY AN INDIAN'S CANOE!



LATER  
I--I DON'T BELIEVE IT!  
I--I CAN'T BE SEEING THAT-- BUT I AM!

I REALLY THINK UNCLE BEN BELIEVES THAT STORY HIMSELF!

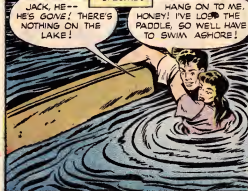


JACK! LOOK! OOOHHHHH!

H--HOLD TIGHT, DARLING!

SUDDENLY THERE WAS A CRASH AND THEIR CANOE CAPSIZED! JACK HELD ONTO HIS WIFE AND THEY BOTH CLUNG TO THE "QUENTINER" CANOE! THE LAKE WAS SUDDENLY QUIET AND PEACEFUL, WITH NO SIGN OF THE SPECTRE!

THE YOUNG COUPLE MADE IT SAFELY TO SHORE...



JACK, HE-- HE'S GONE! THERE'S NOTHING ON THE LAKE!

HANG ON TO ME, HONEY! I'VE LOST THE PADDLE, SO WE'LL HAVE TO SWIM ASHORE!



WE--WE REALLY SAW IT, JACK! WE CAN'T BOTH BE "CRAZY" BUT IT COULDN'T BE! SUCH THINGS DON'T REALLY HAPPEN!

IT HAPPENED ALL RIGHT!

DID IT HAPPEN, OR HAD UNCLE BEN'S STORY AFFECTED THE HONEYMOONERS' IMAGINATIONS MORE THAN THEY HAD REALIZED? YOU'LL HAVE TO ASK THE SMITHS OR GO TO LAKE POONTOSUC YOURSELF AND FIND OUT!

The End

# VENOM OF THE VAMPIRES

**J**OHNNY PIERCE, OWNER AND OPERATOR OF THE ONLY PASSENGER-PLANE SERVICE IN SANTA ROSA, HONDURAS, WENT SUDDENLY OUT OF BUSINESS WHEN HIS PLANE BURST INTO FLAMES HIGH ABOVE THE WILDERNESS OF THE HONDURAS INTERIOR! HE CRASH-LANDED IN A LAKE. HIS PASSENGERS, A PORTUGUESE NOBLEMAN, AND AN AMERICAN SCHOOL-TEACHER, WOULD BE A LONG TIME REACHING THEIR DESTINATIONS NOW, IF EVER...

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, MISS BROWN?

A BIT SHAKEN-UP, BUT STILL IN ONE PIECE!

GROSS NEGLIGENCE! I'LL SUE YOU FOR THIS, PIERCE!

BY JUPITER! YOU'LL PAY FOR THIS. YOU INCOMPETENT YOUNG FOOL! WHERE ARE WE, ANYWAY?

RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE OF NOWHERE. YOU MIGHT AS WELL RELAX, COUNT VACCINI, OLD BOY—THE WORST IS YET TO COME!

**F**ORTUNATELY FOR ELIZABETH BROWN AND COUNT VACCINI, THEIR PILOT WAS FAMILIAR WITH THE FLORA AND FAUNA OF THE REGION. HE PROVIDED EDIBLE FRUITS AND VEGETABLES, AND EVEN CHINCHONA BARK TO PREVENT MALARIA. BUT COULD THEY SURVIVE THE DANGERS THAT LURKED EVERYWHERE IN THE JUNGLE? THE VENOMOUS SERPENTS... THE MAN-EATING JAGUARS?

AFTER THREE DAYS OF TORTUROUS TRAVEL, THEY STUMBLED ON THE RUINS OF AN ANCIENT MAYAN CITY—AND A TRIBE OF INDIANS!

PUT THE ARTILLERY AWAY, FELLOWS. WE WANT TO BE FRIENDS. AMIGOS. CAN'T ANY OF YOU GUYS SPEAK ENGLISH, OR SPANISH?

ME SPEAK. ME GO. ME STAY. WHITE MAN VILLAGE LONG TIME. YOU COME SEE CHIEF. HE SAY WHAT DO.





SOON...  
AMMO LOA  
GOOLA MUM!  
MANNA LOA  
AMMO LOBO!

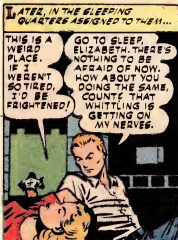
CHIEF SAY YOU STAY.  
EAT. SLEEP. SUN  
COME ME GO TAKE  
YOU WHITE-MAN  
VILLAGE.

GOOD! TELL  
HIM THANKS!



TALK ABOUT LUCK! NOT  
ONLY ARE WE ROOM-AND-  
BOARDED LIKE VISITING  
ROYALTY, BUT THE CHIEF'S  
EVEN FURNISHING US WITH  
A MAN TO SEE US BACK  
TO CIVILIZATION!

BAH! MORE LIKELY  
THAT HEATHEN  
WITCH-DOCTOR-  
CHIEF IS MERELY  
FATTENING US  
FOR THE KILL!



LATER, IN THE SLEEPING  
QUARTERS ASSIGNED TO THEM...

THIS IS A  
WEIRD  
PLACE.  
IF I  
WEREN'T  
SO TIRED,  
I'D BE  
FRIGHTENED!

GO TO SLEEP,  
ELIZABETH. THERE'S  
NOTHING TO BE  
AFRAID OF NOW.  
HOW ABOUT YOU  
DOING THE SAME.  
COUNTS THAT  
WHISTLING IS  
GETTING ON  
MY NERVES.



SUDDENLY...

GREAT GUNS!  
A BAT'S AT  
HER THROAT!



WHA...?

DON'T BE ALARMED!  
IT'S ONLY A VAMPIRE  
BAT - I'VE GOT IT  
OFF YOU NOW.  
YOU'RE IN NO  
DANGER.



IT WOULD REQUIRE A  
SIMULTANEOUS ATTACK  
BY A GREAT NUMBER  
OF THOSE LITTLE BATS  
TO KILL ANYONE.

TALKING ABOUT  
VAMPIRES, THERE'S  
A FAMILY LEGEND  
THAT SOME OF MY  
ANCESTORS TURNED  
INTO VAMPIRES.



I DON'T BELIEVE IT, OF  
COURSE! BUT YET, WITCH-  
CRAFT HAS LONG BEEN A  
HOBBY OF MINE, AND  
WHEN ONE LEARNS  
HOW EFFECTIVE BLACK  
MAGIC CAN BE...

SHUT UP! CAN'T  
YOU SEE HOW  
FRIGHTENED  
THE GIRL IS?  
CUT OUT THAT  
KIND OF TALK!



HA! LOOK! I'VE CARVED AN EFFIGY. I AM IN POSSESSION OF STRANDS OF HAIR I SECRETLY REMOVED FROM THE WITCH-DOCTOR CHIEF! NOW WATCH...



THE HAIRS ARE ATTACHED. THE WOUND IS INFLECTED. COBBA-COBBA MENGGO-ZENGGO ABBA-ZAN! IT IS DONE! YOU CAN SCOFF, BUT IN THE MORNING YOU'RE GOING TO FIND THAT OUR WITCH-DOCTOR HAS RECEIVED A DOSE OF HIS OWN MEDICINE - HIS LEFT LEG WILL BE LAME!



THIS WILL SHUT YOU UP AND PUT YOU TO SLEEP!



THE NEXT MORNING...

ALLO BEELO LOA MONGO. WALLA DOA LULUWANGO!

CHIEF SAY ONE YOU MAKE HEX ON HE. CHIEF SAY HE MAKE MAGIC FIND OUT WHO. YOU GO AWAY. HE WHO MAKE HEX DIE.

HA! I DARE SAY, PIERCE, YOU WON'T SCOFF AT BLACK MAGIC AGAIN!



LUCKY TO ESCAPE THE IRATE INDIANS ALIVE, THE TRIO PLUNGED INTO THE HOSTILE WILDERNESS, ON THEIR OWN AGAIN...

IF WE EVER GET BACK TO CIVILIZATION, COUNT VACCINI, I'M GOING TO CELEBRATE BY BEATING YOU TO A PULP!

I SUGGEST YOU BE MORE CAREFUL, MR. PIERCE. I MIGHT MAKE YOU THE NEXT VICTIM OF MY WITCHCRAFT!

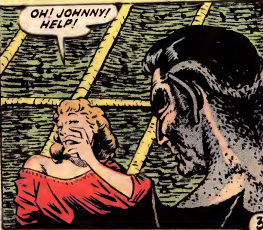


NIGHT FELL, AND THE THREE SLEPT. THEN, AT MIDNIGHT, A STRANGE AND HORRIBLE THING CREEPT ON THE CAMP...



THE THING MOVED IN SILENCE, BUT ELIZABETH AWOKES AND SAW IT, WARNED BY SOME SENSE APART FROM SOUND OR SMELL...

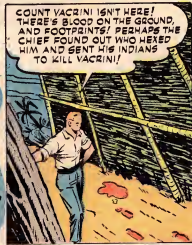
OH! JOHNNY! HELP!







JOHNNY RETURNED TO THE ATTACK, ARMED NOW WITH A PRICKLY BRANCH HE'D PLUCKED FROM THE LEAN-TO...





FRESH  
WARM  
BLOOD!

EEEEEEH!!!

AWOMBA!  
YIIIIIIH!!!

THAT WAS JUST THE BEGINNING! THE  
NEXT NIGHT AND THE NEXT, THE VAM-  
PIRE ATTACKED A VICTIM, AND LEFT  
A BLOODLESS CORPSE...

WE DID AS YOU ORDERED, O CHIEF, AND  
DUG UP THE GRAVE OF THE WHITE MAN  
WE KILLED. BUT THE BODY WAS GONE!  
FOOTPRINTS SHOW IT DID NOT WALK AWAY.  
IT MUST HAVE RISEN FROM THE EARTH  
LIKE A BIRD... \*

\* TRANSLATED FROM NATIVE DIALECT

...OR A BAT! THE WHITE  
WITCH-DOCTOR HAS  
TURNED INTO A VAMPIRE  
TO WREAK VENGEANCE  
UPON US! I AM HELP-  
LESS AGAINST SUCH  
GREAT MAGIC! \*

GO! BRING BACK THE WHITE  
MAN AND GIRL IF THEY  
ARE STILL ALIVE! IF  
THEY CANNOT HELP US,  
WE ARE DOOMED! \*

THE INDIANS FOUND JOHNNY PIERCE  
AND ELIZABETH BROWN IN A MATTER  
OF HOURS. BUT THE PAIR WAS  
MORE DEAD THAN ALIVE...

WE HAVE SOME  
STRANGE DISEASE,  
SAPPING AWAY OUR  
STRENGTH. C-C-ANT  
GO ON...

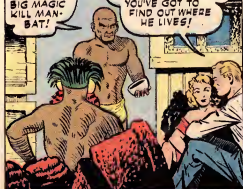
YOU WEAR  
POISON  
PLANT!  
TAKE  
PLANT  
OFF!



LATER, THAT AFTERNOON...

CHIEF SAY  
HE MAKE  
YOU WELL.  
NOW YOU  
TELL HE  
HOW MAKE  
BIG MAGIC  
KILL MAN-  
BAT!

THE PLANT FRIGHTENED  
THE VAMPIRE AWAY, BUT  
THAT'S NOT MUCH HELP  
IF THE PLANT IS  
POISONOUS. TO  
DESTROY A VAMPIRE  
YOU'VE GOT TO  
FIND OUT WHERE  
HE LIVES!



AMMO MEELO  
UMBO WANNA  
LOA LOBO!

CHIEF SAY  
LITTLE  
VAMPIRE  
LIVE IN CAVE,  
BUT NOT  
KNOW  
WHERE BIG  
VAMPIRE  
LIVE!

WHY NOT IN THE  
SAME CAVE?  
WHAT COULD  
BE A MORE  
SUITABLE EN-  
VIRONMENT  
FOR A VAMPIRE  
THAN AMONG  
HIS FELLOW  
CREATURES?  
LET'S GO SEE!



**THE CHIEF ACCEPTED THE SUGGESTION, AND AFTER AN HOURS TRAVEL THEY ARRIVED AT THE CAVE OF THE VAMPIRE BATS...**

CHIEF SAY CAVE VERY BIG LONG. TAKE MANY HOURS LOOK-SEE.

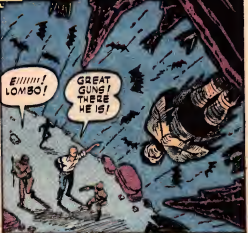
IF HE'S IN HERE, HE'S PROBABLY NOT VERY FAR FROM THE ENTRANCE. LOOK AT ALL THOSE BATS! MUST BE THOUSANDS OF THEM!



**SUDDENLY...**

EIIIIII! LOMBO!

GREAT GUNS! THERE HE IS!



MANALA LOMBO! MUM GOLA UNA LOA LOMBO?

CHIEF SAY WHAT DO NOW? ME KNOW WHAT DO... RUN!

EIIIIIIII!



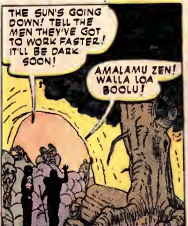
AMANO MUDDODOO!

CHIEF SAY NO RUN. MUST KILL VAMPIRE OR VAMPIRE WILL US! CHIEF SAY WHITE MAN SPEAK NOW. TELL HOW KILL VAMPIRE WITH BELLY SWOLLEN WITH OUR BLOOD!

HMM... THE VAMPIRE'S BELLY WAS BLOATED... AND IF IT WAS WITH BLOOD, MAYBE THAT'S HOW HE CAN BE DESTROYED!



**JOHNNY PIERCE INSTRUCTED THE INDIANS TO BLOCK THE CAVE OPENING. THEY WORKED FEVERISHLY TO ERECT A BARRIER...**



THE SUN'S GOING DOWN! TELL THE MEN THEY'VE GOT TO WORK FASTER! IT'LL BE DARK SOON!

AMALAMU ZEN! WALLA LOA BOOLU!

**A LITTLE LATER, THE SILENCE OF THE CAVE WAS BROKEN BY THE FLUTTERING OF TINY WINGS, AS HUNGRY BATS AWAKENED TO HUNT THROUGH THE NIGHT FOR BLOOD...**



AHH-H... I'M GLAD THAT VAMPIRES DID RUN IN MY FAMILY!

**WHA...? THEY'VE SEALED THE ENTRANCE! I'LL SOON HAVE IT OPEN AGAIN! I HAVE THE POWER AND STRENGTH OF EVIL IN MY BODY!**



TELL THEM THEY'VE GOT TO HOLD! IF HE GETS OUT, WE'RE LOST!

LOA WEEL!  
LOA WEEL!



AS THE VAMPIRE STRUGGLED TO BREACH THE STONES AND BRANCHES SEALING THE CAVE ENTRANCE, HIS SKIN WAS RIPPED IN MANY PLACES AND A SMALL FLOW OF BLOOD BEGAN TO TRICKLE OUT...

FOOLS! DO THEY THINK THEY CAN KEEP ME FROM MY VICTIMS?



... AND AS THE VICIOUS LITTLE BATS SCENTED THE FLOWING BLOOD, THEY REACTED AS CREATURES SUDDENLY DEMENTED...



... AND BEFORE THE VAMPIRE COULD DISLODGE THE BARRIER, HE FOUND HIMSELF SUDDENLY ATTACKED BY HUNDREDS OF THE HUNGRY BATS!

ARGHHH! GET OFF, YOU LITTLE FIENDS!  
OHHHHH!



FOR A LONG MOMENT HORRIFYING SCREAMS RENT THE AIR, AND THEN ALL WAS SUDDENLY SILENT...

WHAT HAPPEN INSIDE CAVE?

JUST WHAT I FIGURED MIGHT HAPPEN! ALL THOSE TRAPPED, HUNGRY LITTLE BATS TURNED ON THE NEAREST SOURCE OF BLOOD - THE VAMPIRE!



A LITTLE LATER...

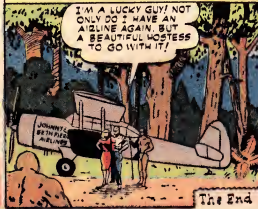
THIS SOLVES THE VAMPIRE PROBLEM! TELL YOUR CHIEF THAT IF HE WANTS TO MAKE ONE HUNDRED PERCENT SURE, TO HAVE THIS THING DISSECTED INTO A THOUSAND PIECES AND BURY EACH PIECE IN A DIFFERENT SPOT.

ME TELL WHITE MAN SAVE TRIBE. WHITE MAN BIG GREAT WITCH-DOCTOR!



THE GRATEFUL INDIANS ESCORTED JOHNNY AND ELIZABETH BACK TO SANTA ROSA, WHERE THEY GOT MARRIED AND STARTED A PLANE TRANSPORTATION BUSINESS TOGETHER...

I'M A LUCKY GUY! NOT ONLY DO I HAVE AN AIRLINE AGAIN, BUT A BEAUTIFUL MISTRESS TO GO WITH IT!



The End



# TRUE CREEPY TALES

42

THERE IS A BELIEF AMONG THE VILLAGE PEOPLE OF YORKSHIRE, ENGLAND, THAT THE SOUL ALWAYS RETURNS TO THE BODY ONCE IN TWENTY-FOUR HOURS UNTIL AFTER THE FUNERAL AND BURIAL OF THE BODY! ONE EVENING AFTER A DAY'S SHOOTING, A YORKSHIRE GENTLEMAN WAS ON HIS WAY HOME...



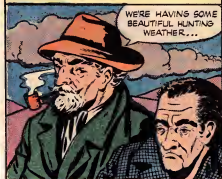
THE ROAD SEEMS LONG AND LONELY THIS TIME OF DAY WHEN A MAN HAS NO ONE TO TALK TO...



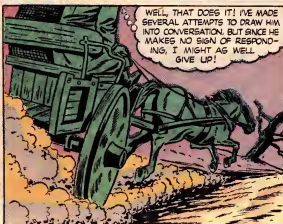
AS THE RETURNING HUNTER APPROACHED A BRIDGE, HE SAW A MAN LEAVING OVER THE RAIL AND LOOKING DOWN INTO THE RIVER BELOW...

A TRAVELER WITH A BAG! PERHAPS HE'S TIRED! IF HE'S GOING MY WAY, I'LL OFFER HIM A LIFT, BECAUSE I'LL BE GLAD TO HAVE COMPANY!

THE MAN ON THE BRIDGE ACCEPTED THE INVITATION TO RIDE, BUT WITHOUT A WORD! HE CLIMBED WORDLESSLY INTO THE CART AND SAT THERE IN SILENCE...

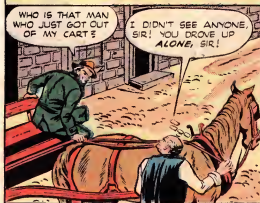


WE'RE HAVING SOME BEAUTIFUL HUNTING WEATHER...



WELL, THAT DOES IT! I'VE MADE SEVERAL ATTEMPTS TO DRAW HIM INTO CONVERSATION, BUT SINCE HE MAKES NO SIGN OF RESPONDING, I MIGHT AS WELL GIVE UP!

AFTER DRIVING SEVERAL MILES IN SILENCE, THEY CAME TO A VILLAGE WHERE THE HUNTER PULLED UP OUTSIDE OF THE INN! HIS COMPANION GOT DOWN AND WITHOUT ONE WORD OF THANKS, WALKED STRAIGHT INTO THE INN...



WHO IS THAT MAN WHO JUST GOT OUT OF MY CART?

I DIDN'T SEE ANYONE, SIR! YOU DROVE UP ALONE, SIR!

FEELING VERY UNCOMFORTABLE, THE HUNTER WENT INTO THE INN AND TALKED TO THE LANDLORD. HE DESCRIBED THE TRAVELER HE HAD PICKED UP. THE LANDLORD LOOKED GRAVE AND TOOK THE HUNTER UPSTAIRS TO A ROOM WHERE ON THE BED LAY THE MAN TO WHOM HE HAD GIVEN THE LIFT!



THAT-THAT'S THE MAN!

THIS MAN WAS FOUND DROWNED TWO DAYS AGO IN THE STREAM CLOSE BY THE BRIDGE WHERE YOU THOUGHT YOU PICKED HIM UP! THEY JUST FINISHED THE IN-QUEST AS YOU DROVE UP, SIR!

COULD THIS HAVE REALLY HAPPENED? THE HUNTER HAS SPOOK! IT IS SO! WHAT DO YOU THINK? ...The lord...



# The Lamenting Voice of the Bell

LISTEN, HERR SCHNABEL. IS IT NOT EXACTLY LIKE I PROMISED? DO THE BELLS NOT PRODUCE A MOST BEAUTIFUL TONE?

QUITE SO, HERR WALDEN. THE TONE IS TRULY LIKE THE VOICE OF ANGELS. THESE BELLS WILL SURELY MAKE OUR CARILLON THE MOST EXQUISITE IN THE WORLD!

**F**

FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD CAME SHOUTS OF ACCLAIM FOR THE SINISTER-LOOKING HUNCHBACK WHOSE BELL-CASTING RESULTED IN MASTERPIECES, TRULY SOUNDING LIKE THE VOICES OF ANGELS. THE PEOPLE OF DORFSTADT, AT THE EDGE OF THE BLACK FOREST, WERE PROUD TO CLAIM HIM AS ONE OF THE TOWN'S LEADING CITIZENS, DESPITE HIS EXTREME UGLINESS. BUT WHAT WAS THE SECRET INGREDIENT THAT MADE HIS BELLS PRODUCE THE MOST BEAUTIFUL TONES EVER HEARD? FOR THAT ANSWER, DEAR READER, READ ON...

THEN IT IS ALL ARRANGED. YOU WILL DELIVER THE BELLS WITHIN THE WEEK. BY THE WAY, I UNDERSTAND THAT YOU HAVE A SPECIAL INGREDIENT MIXED INTO THE BELLS THAT PRODUCES SUCH WONDERFUL TONE. WHAT IS IT?

AHH... THAT IS MY SECRET!

IF ONLY HE KNEW THAT THE MYSTERIOUS DISAPPEARANCE OF THE CHILDREN OF DORFSTADT WAS MY DOING... AND THAT THEIR BROKEN LITTLE BODIES WERE THROWN INTO THE BUBBLING CAULDRON! BUT I SHALL TAKE MY SECRET TO THE GRAVE!

YOU HAVE PERFORMED A REAL SERVICE! I HAD NOT EXPECTED YOU TO FINISH THE BELLS SO SOON!

I HAD ANOTHER ORDER... TO REPLACE THE BELL OF THE TOWN HALL WHICH WAS BROKEN LAST MONTH, BUT I DECIDED TO LET THEM WAIT.

IT'S ABOUT TIME YOU FINISHED WITH YOUR BUSINESS, HANS. LOOK WHO CAME WHILE YOU WERE IN THE SHOP.

JOHANN MIER... MY OLD FRIEND! BUT I THOUGHT YOU WERE IN HEIDELBERG.

I HAVE SOLD MY BUSINESS, HANS, AND I'M RETURNING TO DORFSTADT TO RETIRE. MY DOCTOR TELLS ME I HAVE BUT A FEW MORE YEARS TO LIVE.

OH, I'M SORRY TO HEAR THAT, MY FRIEND!

LATER IN THE EVENING. AFTER SUPPER...

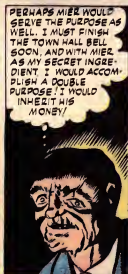
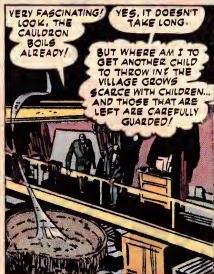
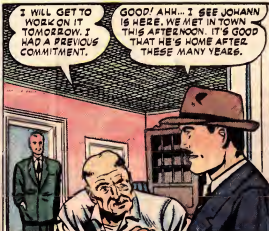
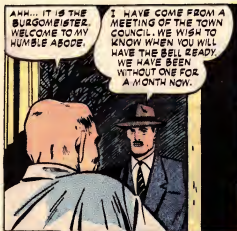
YOU SHOULD NOT FEEL BADLY, MY FRIEND. YOU HAVE LIVED A GOOD LIFE!

I ENVY YOU, HANS. I HAVE NO WIFE... NO RELATIVES.

AHH! BUT YOU HAVE FRIENDS, JOHANN!

YES, YOU ARE MY DEAREST FRIEND, HANS. AND FOR THAT REASON I HAVE MADE YOU MY ONLY HEIR. I'M QUITE RICH, AND I COULD NEVER SPEND ALL MY MONEY... EVEN IN THE FEW YEARS I HAVE LEFT.

THAT IS TRULY A FINE GESTURE, GOOD FRIEND. LET US DRINK A TOAST TO YOUR HEALTH! A KNOCK! WHO WOULD CALL AT THIS HOUR?



AFTER FINISHING HIS FIENDISH WORK,  
WALDEN RETURNED TO THE HOUSE...

OH! YOU'RE STILL  
AWAKE? ER... IT'S  
VERY LATE.  
JOHANN HAS  
ALREADY  
LEFT.

THAT'S STRANGE.  
IT'S NOT LIKE HIM  
TO LEAVE WITHOUT  
SAYING GOOD  
NIGHT.

NERVOUSLY, WALDEN AWAITED THE REPORT OF MIER'S  
DISAPPEARANCE. FINALLY, TWO DAYS AFTER THE MURDER...

GOOD DAY, HANS. I HAVEN'T COME  
TO ASK OF THE BELL, BUT RATHER  
OF JOHANN MIER. HE SEEMS TO  
HAVE DISAPPEARED. IT SEEMS  
THAT YOU WERE THE LAST  
TO SEE HIM.

YES, THE SAME  
NIGHT THAT YOU  
WERE AT MY  
HOUSE. BUT HE  
LEFT SOON  
AFTER YOU.

WHEN HE DIDN'T RETURN TO HIS  
HOTEL ROOM, WE ENTERED AND  
FOUND THIS AMONG HIS EFFECTS.  
DID YOU KNOW THAT YOU WERE  
HIS ONLY HEIR?

WHY, YES... BUT  
YOU DON'T THINK  
I WOULD KILL  
MIER FOR HIS  
MONEY?

BUT I DIDN'T SAY  
MIER HAD BEEN  
KILLED! I ONLY  
SAID HE WAS  
MISSING! WHAT  
MAKES YOU  
THINK HE'S  
DEAD?

OH... ER... IT  
WAS THE WAY YOU  
SAID IT.  
I THOUGHT  
YOU WERE  
SUGGESTING...

THAT NIGHT, AFTER FINISHING  
THE CASTING OF THE BELL,  
WALDEN RETIRED...

I ALMOST MADE A DANGER-  
GUS SLIP TODAY... BUT I  
DON'T THINK THE BURGO-  
MEISTER SUSPECTS ANYTHING.  
YES... I'M PERFECTLY  
SAFE!

BUT NO SOONER HAD THE BELL-MAKER FALLEN ASLEEP  
THAN A STARTLING THING HAPPENED...

WHA... WHAT'S THAT? A BELL  
TOLLING! AND JOHANN'S VOICE!  
IT'S MY BELL... IT'S COMING  
FROM THE SHOP!

DONGGGGG  
DONGGGGGGG  
DONGGGGGGGGG

AWAKEN...  
HANS WALDEN...  
AWAKEN...

THIS CANNOT BE!  
SOMEONE IN THE  
SHOP IS RINGING  
THE BELL... BUT  
THAT VOICE...

DONGGG  
DONGGG

AWAKEN...  
HANS WALDEN...

NO ONE IS HERE... BUT IT CAN'T BE! THE BELL IS TOLLING BY ITSELF! STOP! DO YOU HEAR ME? STOP TOLLING! DO YOU WANT THEM TO FIND ME OUT?

DONGGGGG  
DONGGGGG



IT'S STOPPED. BUT HOW COULD IT RING BY ITSELF? WAIT... THAT VOICE... IT'S JOHANN'S VOICE!

YOU WILL KNOW NO REST TILL I AM AVENGED. HANS WALDEN. I SHALL TOLL EVERY NIGHT AT 11:00 THE EXACT HOUR THAT YOU KILLED ME, UNTIL YOU ADMIT YOUR GUILT!



NO... NO! IT CAN'T BE! JOHANN IS DEAD... I'M IMAGINING IT ALL! THAT'S IT... I'M IMAGINING IT ALL!



THE NEXT DAY, ON AN IMPULSE, WALDEN DECIDED TO LOOK INTO THE POSSIBILITY OF COLLECTING HIS INHERITANCE...

JOHANN MIER WAS MY DEAREST FRIEND. I'M SURE HE MUST BE DEAD. HE WOULD NOT JUST VANISH WITHOUT TELLING ME WHERE HE WAS GOING. AND I THINK I SHOULD BE GIVEN THE MONEY!

MIER MAY VERY WELL BE DEAD... BUT WE NEED PROOF FIRST!



YOU SEE, WITHOUT PROOF, WE MUST ASSUME HE IS STILL ALIVE. ACCORDING TO GERMAN LAW, A MAN CANNOT BE CONSIDERED DEAD UNTIL TEN YEARS AFTER HIS DISAPPEARANCE... AND IT TAKES THAT LONG FOR HIS HEIRS TO COLLECT HIS MONEY!

WHAT?



TEN YEARS! I'M TRAPPED. I CANNOT TELL THEM, AND THEY WON'T GIVE ME THE MONEY... WAIT! WHAT'S THAT? THE BELL AGAIN!

DONGGGGG  
DONGGGGG



I WON'T GO OUT... I WON'T LISTEN TO IT! I'LL SHUT OUT THE SOUND! OH... HOW TERRIBLE IT SOUNDS! IT'S NOT LIKE THE OTHER BELLS! IT'S PIERCING MY EAR DRUMS!







HANS WALDEN... I  
WILL HAUNT YOUR  
EVERY HOUR TILL  
YOU CONFESS  
YOUR SINE!

DONGGGGGG

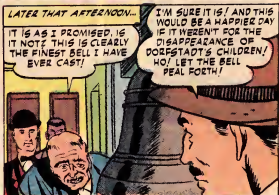
DONGGGGGG

NO! STOP THE  
BELL FROM  
TOLLING! MY  
HEAD IS  
SPUTTING!



I'LL RID MYSELF OF YOU!  
I'LL FINISH UP THE BELL  
AND HAVE IT PLACED  
IN THE TOWN  
HALL.

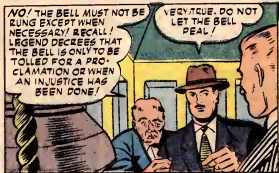
IT WILL DO NO  
GOOD! YOU CAN-  
NOT ESCAPE MY  
VENGEANCE!



LATER THAT AFTERNOON...

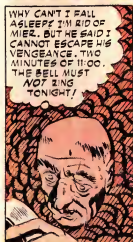
IT IS AS I PROMISED, IS  
IT NOT? THIS IS CLEARLY  
THE FINEST BELL I HAVE  
EVER CAST!

I'M SURE IT IS! AND THIS  
WOULD BE A HAPPIER DAY  
IF IT WEREN'T FOR THE  
DISAPPEARANCE OF  
DORFSTADT'S CHILDREN!  
HO! LET THE BELL  
PEAL FORTH!

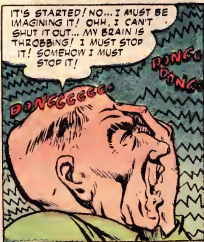


NO! THE BELL MUST NOT BE  
RUNG EXCEPT WHEN  
NECESSARY! RECALL!  
LEGEND DECREES THAT  
THE BELL IS ONLY TO BE  
TOLLED FOR A PRO-  
CLAMATION OR WHEN  
AN INJUSTICE HAS  
BEEN DONE!

VERY TRUE. DO NOT  
LET THE BELL  
PEAL!



WHY CAN'T I FALL  
ASLEEP? I'M RID OF  
MIER. BUT HE SAID I  
CANNOT ESCAPE HIS  
VENGEANCE. TWO  
MINUTES OF 11:00.  
THE BELL MUST  
NOT RING  
TONIGHT!



IT'S STARTED! NO... I MUST BE  
IMAGINING IT! OHH, I CAN'T  
SHUT IT OUT... MY BRAIN IS  
THROBBING! I MUST STOP  
IT! SOMEHOW I MUST  
STOP IT!

DONG  
DONGGGGGG



MIER! STOP IT, DO YOU HEAR?  
WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO DO?  
I'LL HAVE TO STOP HIM BEFORE  
HE GIVES MY SECRET TO THE  
WHOLE TOWN!

MOST AMAZING! THE BELL TOLLS BY ITSELF, BUT WHAT A TERRIBLE SOUND! IT'S LIKE THE SOUND OF DEATH!

BUT IT ISN'T POSSIBLE!

STOP IT! MAKE HIM STOP! MAKE MIER STOP TOLLING THE BELL! I CAN'T TAKE IT ANY LONGER!

MIER! WHAT HAS HE GOT TO DO WITH THE BELL TOLLING BY ITSELF? WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

IT'S MIER! HE'S DOING IT! HE'S IN THE BELL!

WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

I THREW HIM INTO THE BUBBLING CAULDRON...JUST LIKE I DID WITH ALL THE CHILDREN I KIDNAPPED! THAT WAS MY SECRET INGREDIENT! BUT MAKE HIM STOP... BEFORE I GO CRAZY!

AND WITH THIS CONFESSION, THE BELL SUDDENLY STOPPED TOLLING, AND IT NEVER TOLLED AGAIN... FOR THE VERY SOUND OF ITS TONE WAS ENOUGH TO DESTROY A MAN'S MIND! WALDEN WAS TRIED FOR HIS ATROCITIES AND SENT TO THE GALLONS!

Then Ends

## SUR-PRIZE CONTEST

- 1<sup>ST</sup> PRIZE** . . . \$ **15<sup>00</sup>**  
**2<sup>ND</sup> PRIZE** . . . \$ **5<sup>00</sup>**  
**3<sup>RD</sup> PRIZE** . . . \$ **3<sup>00</sup>**  
**4<sup>TH</sup> PRIZE** . . . \$ **2<sup>00</sup>**

**W**IN A CASH PRIZE FOR JUST A SHORT LETTER OF NOT MORE THAN 150 WORDS TELLING US WHICH STORY YOU LIKE BEST, 2<sup>ND</sup> BEST, 3<sup>RD</sup> BEST, AND WHY. ALSO WHICH OTHER MAGAZINES YOU READ REGULARLY.

**SEND IT TO US POSTMARKED NO LATER THAN JANUARY 15, 1951, ALONG WITH YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS AND AGE. IN CASE OF A TIE DUPLICATE PRIZES WILL BE AWARDED. DO IT NOW!! HURRY!!**

**CREEPY STORIES — 23 WEST 47 ST. N.Y. 19, N.Y.C.**

# MODEL FOR A MADMAN

Wild, horrible emotions surged through her mind. She was a prisoner and in the next room a girl—lay dead! Or was she dead? Ann summoned every ounce of courage she possessed, tiptoed into the small room and slowly approached the figure on the bed. Very carefully she reached out until her finger-tips touched the girl's face. Then she hurriedly drew her hand away. The flesh was cold as ice.

This girl was stone dead.

Ann's eyes widened in sheer horror. Fascinated, they swept the dead girl's body until she saw a bluish mark on the left ankle. There were two more around each wrist. What did they mean? Why was this dead girl here?

LeMay crouched somewhere out in the corridor. Ann hurried back to the dressing room. No matter what happened, she must keep her head. Yet the horror of the dead girl's face haunted her, made her hands tremble. She rummaged in her suitcase, looking for some kind of a weapon. There was none, but a folded newspaper, which she hadn't as yet read, drew her eyes. There was a picture of a girl on the front page. Below it was a concise story.

Myrtle Barnes, convicted murderess, died last night in the electric chair. Early this morning her body was claimed by some relative whose exact identity was never determined.

The story went on in detail, but Ann had no desire to read further. She was trembling and a cold, unaccountable lethargy gripped her. LeMay had claimed the body of an executed woman. Why? Ann's mind answered the unspoken question. LeMay painted only portraits of women who were dying or dead. He needed models—dead models—from which to work.

That was why his art was acclaimed for its grim detail. That was why Cleopatra had aroused such attention. His Mata Hari so terribly real. LeMay had painted well, loyal to the last agonizing expression on the face of history's famous women.

Ann took a firm grip on her nerves. She parted the curtains and walked out into the studio itself. LeMay was nowhere in sight. Ann listened, heard no sound of his feet and moved quietly toward the shielded corner of the room. She parted the curtains and dropped them again with a gasp of terror.

There was a half finished portrait behind the curtain—a portrait and the set upon which the model had posed. The picture depicted a blonde woman, strapped in an electric chair with each minute line of her terror laden face brought out as if by magic.

Ann sensed, rather than heard LeMay's presence in the room behind her. She spun around, one hand near her throat, her eyes alight in horror. But LeMay was quietly seated in a chair, studying a book.

He spoke without looking up. "I'm sorry you saw that, my dear. It isn't finished and I doubt that it ever shall be. For once I was quite in error. You see, for a woman to really portray a combination of beauty and terror, she must be something of a martyr, a heroine, against a colorful background. Take this for instance." He glanced up. "Are you familiar with *Le Mortel d'Arthur*?"

Ann could only shake her head and look vainly for an avenue of escape. LeMay quoted from the book he held.

Something in Ann's mind clicked. LeMay, a madman with only a passion for painting the death scenes of famous women, had contrived for a new idea. Her clothes—those of King Arthur's time! She was to be Elaine, the Fair Maid of Astolat. The Fair Maid who died for love of Lancelot and whose body was placed on a black barge.

"That girl!"—Ann pointed toward the dressing room. "She is dead. She was electrocuted last night. I—I read it in the papers! There's a picture of her—"

LeMay was close enough to place a hand on Ann's shoulder. It rested lightly for a moment and then the fingers clamped tightly.

"But I have done the poor girl a favor," he said suavely. "She was legally killed last night. There were no relatives. It seems she murdered all she had. Potter's Field is not a pleasant place to lie. I tried to paint her, but—it will not succeed. There is a certain harshness I cannot overcome. But in you—with such finely textured skin, eyes that can betray exquisite pain. Ah, there is something else again. You—shall be Elaine, Fair Maid of Astolat."

"No," Ann screamed.

"But think," he waved his arm, "a barge, covered in somber black with a bier upon which lies the body of Elaine, dressed in white. Her features utterly composed for she died a willing, calm death for love of Lancelot. It will be a sensation, I tell you, greater than Cleopatra. You have seen that portrait, my dear?"

Ann tried to speak, but her tongue remained frozen to the roof of her mouth.

"Come," he took her arm in a grip that made her wince. They walked through two big rooms and into a third that was inky black. LeMay left her for a moment and Ann had an urge to flee; to run for the highest part of the house if no doors were open; no windows capable of being smashed. But it would gain her nothing. If she remained cool, there might be a chance.

LeMay struck a match and its yellow glow showed up the room as hung in dismal black velvet. The only piece of furniture was a small ebony table upon

which rested two pewter cocktail glasses. LeMay pulled a cord and a section of the drapery parted. Set in a wall recess about five feet deep were tall candlebras standing beside a full length portrait. LeMay touched the candle wicks with the match and slowly the gruesome portrait came in relief.

It was a masterpiece—but more of horror than art, although the art was astounding in itself. The central figure was a dark-haired woman, in the throes of death included by an asp which still squirmed in one hand. It was lifelike to an astonishing degree. Ann could almost hear the moans from the lips of the dying Cleopatra.

"I have been offered a fortune for it," LeMay boasted. "But sell—ah, never. Like the portrait I shall do of you—as Elaine, my dear. It will be greater than this for hers was a death of peace."

He walked over to the small table and picked up the cocktail glasses. Ann took one in a hand almost too palsied to grip it. Some of the liquor spilled over the rim and ran down her forearm.

LeMay said: "To Elaine!"

Ann didn't drink. She backed away slowly and LeMay followed her. With a savage bellow he emptied his glass and hurled it from him.

"You're going to kill me," Ann cried. "You'll kill me as you killed those others. That's why they are so vivid. Your models are real. The corpses you paint are real corpses."

"So then," LeMay said very softly, "is it not fitting that an artist so great as I should select my own type of model? What is life when your portrait shall exist into eternity? What is death compared to such honor, such glory? And it will not be hard — I promise you. For Elaine must look calm and serene in death. Come. Drink the cocktail and we'll discuss this."

Ann was whiter than the dress she wore. But the glass in her hand was steady now. Faced with certain death she collected her spinning wits.

"First," she spoke quietly, "let me see the Cleopatra again—I must be certain."

He bowed with an exaggerated grin of triumph on his face. Ann walked slowly toward the portrait. Unless she could think of an avenue for escape she was doomed. Somehow, LeMay had to be distracted and the villagers summoned. But how? The candles flickered as Ann brushed against them. She peered steadily up at the great canvas and repressed the shudder that stole over her.

Suddenly she spun around. "You—murderer," she cried. "You—who murder to gain your models. The girl who posed for Cleopatra—where did you find her? In an agency, as you found me. But that girl was my sister. My sister, do you hear me? I swore I'd kill the man who murdered her."

LeMay backed away. Ann hurled the cocktail at him. He ducked and gave vent to a screech of fear. Before he could advance on her or even watch her actions, Ann pulled the velvet drapes in front of the portrait, pulled them so that one burning candle's flame licked at the dry material. Then she raced past LeMay.

He was after her in a flash, roaring now in open lunacy. She hurled every article she could find at him, screamed her condemnation of him for a killer.

But he was not to be outdone now. Cleverly he maneuvered so that she was trapped. He advanced slowly.

"Fool—you shall die anyway. But you only make it difficult. The cocktail would have been easy. I must be careful not to mark your white throat. And it must be quick, lest a spasm of agony cross your face. Elaine died peacefully. There is no escape now. No escape!"

"Behind you," Ann screamed. "Fire! The Cleopatra is afire."

LeMay whirled and his mad screech rose above the slowly growing sound of licking flames. He hurled himself into the room, emerged a second later only to cover his face and plunge back into the inferno.

Ann raced to the front door. It was locked by several bolts. She pulled them back while her heart pounded furiously. Then she had the door open. A gust of cool, fresh air surged through the house. . . .

They found her staggering down the driveway. Two men helped her into a car. One wore a sheriff's badge. Fire apparatus streaked by heading for the house.

Ann told her story, but the skepticism she had expected didn't occur. The sheriff said, "We suspected something like that. In the morning we were going up there. He stole the body of that executed woman."

"He was mad," Ann said in a tired voice. "He tried to gain fame and couldn't succeed until his warped mind fell on the idea of painting models so horribly true to life or death. It worked and he became famous. It inspired him to paint other such portraits."

"And the girl was really your sister—the one you said posed for that picture?"

Ann shook her head. "No. When I realized LeMay was mad, I hit upon that idea to confuse him, to occupy his disordered mind. I didn't want him to see me set fire to the drapes. I knew he'd forget me and risk his life to get the Cleopatra. . . ."

Ann gave a little sigh and her eyes closed. The sheriff put a brawny, fatherly arm about her.

"I'm thinking," he told the driver of the car, "that LeMay will do his next painting in the deepest part of hell. Look at that house go!"

THE END

# GHOST SHIP OF THE CARIBBEAN

WHEN BILL JOHNSON AND HIS BRIDE, ANNE, SET OUT ON THEIR HONEYMOON, THEY PLANNED A LEISURELY CRUISE THROUGH THE FLORIDA KEYS, BUT UNPREDICTABLE FATE INTERVENED IN THE FORM OF A SUDDEN TROPICAL HURRICANE AND THE EVENTS WHICH THEN TOOK PLACE WERE SO STRANGE AND BIZARRE THAT FEW PEOPLE WILL BELIEVE...EVEN BILL AND ANNE SOMETIMES THINK OF IT AS ONLY AN EVIL DREAM...UNTIL THEY REMEMBER THE PEARLS...BUT HERE ARE THE FACTS AS THEY HAPPENED! JUDGE FOR YOURSELF!



OH, BILL,  
(COUGH)  
HELP ME!

HOLD ON TIGHT,  
ANNE, OR YOU'LL BE  
SWEEPED OVERBOARD.

THE FIERCE WINDS DROVE SALT SPRAY LIKE HAIL INTO THEIR FACES, AND THE GIANT WAVES THREATENED TO CAPSIZE THE LAUNCH AT EVERY INSTANT...

I'VE GOT TO KEEP THIS THING HEADED INTO  
THE WIND OR WE'RE LOST FOR SURE!



BUT AFTER NUMBING HOURS OF STRUGGLE, THEY ENTERED THE 'EYE' OF THE STORM--THE EERIE CALM AT THE CENTER OF THE RAGING HURRICANE AND THERE A STRANGE SIGHT MET THEIR EYES...

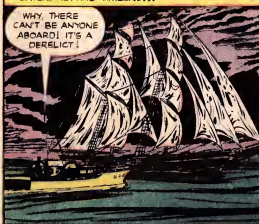
THANK GOODNESS WE'RE  
OUT OF THAT FOR A WHILE!  
OH, LOOK, BILL! A SHIP!

THAT'S ODD! IT LOOKS  
AT LEAST A HUNDRED  
YEARS OLD! LET'S GET  
A CLOSER LOOK!





AS THEY NEARED THE FORLORN HULK, THEY COULD SEE MORE CLEARLY ITS TATTERED SAILS AND WORM-EATEN, ROTTING TIMBERS...



WHY, THERE CAN'T BE ANYONE ABOARD! IT'S A DERELICT!

COME ON, ANNE! I'M GOING TO HAVE A LOOK! WHO KNOWS HOW MANY YEARS THIS SHIP HAS BEEN DRIFTING? I'M GOING TO FIND OUT WHAT HAPPENED TO THE CREW!

I--I'M AFRAID, BILL! IT'S SO...SO GHOSTLY! BESIDES, IT DOESN'T LOOK SAFE!



NONSENSE! I'LL BET THIS SHIP HAS WEATHERED MANY A STORM BEFORE THIS ONE! COME ON BELOW! THERE'S NOTHING MUCH HERE ON DECK!

W-WELL...BE SURE YOU TIE OUR BOAT GOOD AND TIGHT!



BELOW DECK, IN THE CREW'S QUARTERS, A GHASTLY SIGHT AWAITED THEM!

OH, BILL... I--I CAN'T LOOK!

TAKE IT EASY, HONEY! IT'S TOUGH TO LOOK AT, BUT THEY'VE BEEN DEAD A LONG TIME! THEY CAN'T HURT US!



LOOK AT THIS OLD LOG BOOK! IT SAYS THIS SHIP IS THE BRIG 'FEARLESS' OUT OF PROVINCE-TOWN, CAPTAIN PHINEAS JOHNSON MASTER. ANNE MY GREAT GRANDFATHER'S NAME WAS PHINEAS AND HE WAS LOST AT SEA! DO YOU SUPPOSE...?



AT THAT INSTANT, THE CENTER OF THE STORM PASSED, AND THE RAGING HURRICANE ENGULFED THE SHIP IN ALL ITS FURY! THE FRIGHTENED COUPLE RAN OUT ON DECK!

OH, BILL...THE LAUNCH HAS BROKEN LOOSE!

WE'LL RIDE OUT THE STORM ON THIS OLD HULK AND THEN HEAD FOR SHORE! COME ON AFT TO THE WHEEL!



BUT THE WORST WAS YET TO COME! FOR, AS THEY NEARED THE STERN OF THE DERELICT...



OH! BILL!

WH--?

WHO...  
W-WHAT  
ARE  
YOU?

WE ARE THE **DEAD!** AYE, THE DEAD  
WHO ONCE MANNED THIS SHIP OF  
MYSTERY! WE ARE DOOMED TO GAIL  
ON ETERNALLY, GUARDING ITS FATEFUL  
SECRET FROM ALL FOOLISH MORTALS WHO  
WOULD DARE TO PRY!



FOR A HUNDRED LONG YEARS SINCE A PLAGUE  
CUT SHORT OUR LIVES, WE HAVE DRIFTED WITH  
WIND AND TIDE! THIS DERELICT HOLDS THE DREADFUL  
SECRET OF OUR SINFUL PAST WHICH MORTAL  
MAN MUST NOT DISCOVER!



RISE, YE ROARING WINDS!  
AND MOUNTAINOUS SEAS!  
PLUCK THESE FRAIL HUMANS  
FROM OUR HOME AND BLEACH  
THEIR BONES ON SOME  
DISTANT REEF!

BILL...  
**HELP!**  
I'M  
SLIPPING!

GRAB MY ARM!  
WE'VE GOT TO  
GET BELOW! IT'S  
OUR ONLY  
CHANCE!



**SLIPPING, SLIDING** THROUGH THE GREEN WAVES  
WHICH LASHED ACROSS THE DECK, BILL AND  
ANNE STRUGGLED TO REACH THE COMPANION-  
WAY WHICH LED BELOW DECK! HALF THE TIME  
COMPLETELY SUBMERGED, THEIR PROGRESS  
WAS AGONIZINGLY SLOW, AS THE GHOSTLY  
CREW SCREECHED IN FIENDISH GLEE...



**SUDDENLY, ABOVE THE ROAR OF THE  
STORM BILL HEARD A RENDING  
CRASH! HE LOOKED UP JUST IN  
TIME TO SEE A HUGE SPAR HURLING  
DOWN AT THEM!**

**THE SHIP SHUDDERED AND LURCHED  
SICKENINGLY, THEN SLOWLY RIGHTED  
HERSELF! BUT THE LAST HOPE OF  
SAFETY FOR BILL AND ANNE WAS  
SHATTERED BY THE CRASHING SPAR!**

**BUT AT THAT INSTANT A MIGHTY  
VOICE BELLOWED ABOVE THE STORM...**

**LOOK OUT,  
ANNE!**

**OHhhh!**



BILL! THE  
COMPANIONWAY!  
IT... IT'S  
**BLOCKED!**

NDIV, DIE, FOOLS!  
**HA HA HA HA HA!**



AVAST THERE, YE MUTINIOUS  
DOGS! IT IS I, CAPTAIN PHINEAS  
JOHNSON, WHO COMMAND YE!  
YE CURSED PACK O' THIEVES AND  
CUTTHROATS WHO WERE ONCE  
MY CREW! STAND BACK, OR BE-  
WARE MY WRATH!



THE STARTLED CREW SULLENLY WITHDREW, MUTTERING CURSES AND LEERING EVILLY, BUT THE GHOST OF CAPTAIN PHINEAS PAID THEM NO HEED...

HAVE NO FEAR, BILL JOHNSON! IT IS I, YOUR GREAT GRANDFATHER PHINEAS! I HAVE RETURNED FROM AN UNEASY GRAVE TO WREAK MY VENGEANCE ON THIS CREW OF MURDEROUS ROGUES!

THEN IT'S TRUE! THIS WAS YOUR SHIP! THE ONE THAT DISAPPEARED SO LONG AGO WITH ALL HANDS!



"AYE, LAD! IN THOSE DAYS THE BRIG 'FEARLESS' WAS A TRIM CRAFT, UNLIKE THE HULK YE SEE NOW! I WAS PROUD TO BE HER SKIPPER AS WE DROPPED ANCHOR IN THE HARBOR AT PORTOBELLO WITH A CARGO OF MAINE TIMBER!"



"TRADE WAS GOOD, AND AFTER A FORTNIGHT WE WEIGHED ANCHOR WITH A FORTUNE IN PEARLS ABOARD! BUT MY SCURVY CREW, LED BY BLACK TOM, LORD PLOTTED TO GET THOSE PEARLS!"



"THE DOGS MUTINIED AND TOOK MY SHIP! THEY MURDERED THE ONLY TWO LOYAL HANDS AND MAROONED ME ON A DESOLATE ISLAND!"



"THEY HAD THE PEARLS THEN, BUT THEY WERE AFRAID TO RETURN TO PORT, SO THEY HOISTED THE BLACK FLAG AND SET TO PREYING ON THE HONEST MERCHANTMEN!"



"BUT THEY WEREN'T TO LAST FOR LONG! FOR UNBUNKOWN TO THEM THE WATER CASKS WERE CONTAMINATED WITH SOME DREAD DISEASE, WHICH CAUSED THEM HIGH FEVER AND GREAT PAINS!"



"AND BEFORE LONG THERE WAS NO LIFE ABOARD THE 'FEARLESS' SAVE RATS! BLACK TOM AND HIS BLOODY GANG CAME TO A DREADFUL AND DESERVED END! FROM THAT DAY TO THIS, THE BRIG HAS DRIFTED... UNDIRECTED BY HUMAN HAND..."



THESE ARE THE RESTLESS SPIRITS OF BLACK TOM AND HIS CREW OF SCOUNDRELS, THE PEARLS FOR WHICH THEY BARGAINED WITH THE DEVIL REMAIN HID IN THE HOLD! COME NOW WITH YOUR BRIDE AND RECLAIM THE WEALTH THAT IS RIGHTFULLY YOURS!



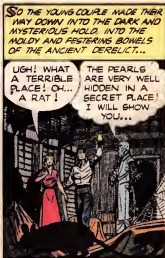


COME ON, MONEY!

BILL, I DON'T LIKE THE WAY THE GHOST CREW IS MUTTERING. I'M AFRAID THEY'RE UP TO SOMETHING!



THEY SEEM TO BE AFRAID OF CAPTAIN PHINEAS' GHOST! HE CAN HANDLE THEM!



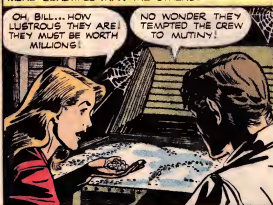
UGH! WHAT A TERRIBLE PLACE! OH... A RAT!

THE PEARLS ARE VERY WELL HIDDEN IN A SECRET PLACE! I WILL SHOW YOU...



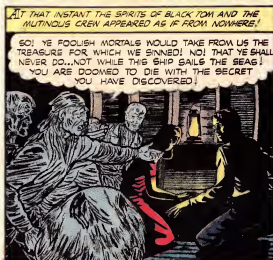
FIRST, I SLIDE OPEN THIS SECRET WALL PANEL...

IF THE GHOST OF OLD PHINEAS OPENED THE SECRET PANEL! WHAT BILL AND ANNE SAW INSIDE MADE THEM GASP IN ASTONISHMENT! FOR THERE WERE HUNDREDS UPON HUNDREDS OF PERFECT OPALESCENT PEARLS, EACH MORE BEAUTIFUL THAN THE OTHERS!



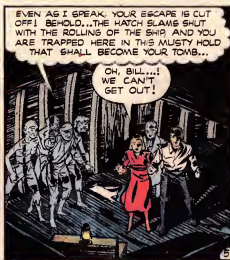
OH, BILL... HOW LUSTROUS THEY ARE! THEY MUST BE WORTH MILLIONS!

NO WONDER THEY TEMPTED THE CREW TO MUTINY!



AT THAT INSTANT THE SPIRITS OF BLACK TOM AND THE MUTINOUS CREW APPEARED AS IF FROM NOWHERE!

SO! YE FOOLISH MORTALS WOULD TAKE FROM US THE TREASURE FOR WHICH WE SINNED! NO! THAT YE SHALL NEVER DO...NOT WHILE THIS SHIP SAILS THE SEAS! YOU ARE DOOMED TO DIE WITH THE SECRET YOU HAVE DISCOVERED!



EVEN AS I SPEAK, YOUR ESCAPE IS CUT OFF! BEHOLD...THE HATCH SLAMS SHUT WITH THE ROLLING OF THE SHIP, AND YOU ARE TRAPPED HERE IN THIS MUSTY HOLD THAT SHALL BECOME YOUR TOMB...

OH, BILL...! WE CAN'T GET OUT!



THERE IS NO WAY OUT! YOU HAVE TWO CHOICES...EITHER DIE A LINGERING DEATH OF THIRST, OR...DRINK! YES, DRINK THE POLLUTION THAT CAUSED OUR DEATHS! ONE THING IS SURE...YOUR BONES WILL CRUMBLE TO DUST IN THE SPIDERY SLIME OF THE BILGES!



YOU ARE MISTAKEN, BLACK TOM LORD! YE SHALL NOT FOIL ME A SECOND TIME! THE HOUR OF MY REVENGE IS AT HAND, FOR WHICH I HAVE WAITED LONG! I CURSE YOU AND YOUR MUTINOUS CREW OF SPIRITS! THIS NIGHT THE TIMBERS OF THIS ONCE PROUD SHIP SHALL FIND PERMANENT REST, AND YOU SHALL BE DESTROYED BY FIRE!



AS THE CAPTAIN'S VOICE RANG OUT LIKE THE KNELL OF DOOM, THERE WAS A SUDDEN GRINDING CRASH AND SICKENING JAR...

THE LANTERN WAS KNOCKED FROM BILL'S HAND AND OVER-TURNED ON A PILE OF TAR-SOAKED DEBRIS!

AND ALMOST INSTANTLY A HUGE FIRE SPREAD OVER THE ROTTING HOLD!

WE MUST HAVE RUN AGROUND!



OH, BILL, WHAT CAN WE DO?

WATER IS POURING IN UP FORWARD! THE CRASH MUST HAVE KNOCKED A HOLE IN THE HULL! COME ON!

FIRE SHALL BE YOUR AGENT OF DESTRUCTION, BLACK TOM! FEEL IT'S HEAT SEARING YOUR GHOSTLY SHELL!



THE ANCIENT HOLD WAS TRANSFORMED INTO A VAST CAULDRON OF WRITHING SHAPES AND BILLOWING SMOKE AS THE HUNGRY FLAMES CONSUMED ALL IN THEIR PATH.

CEASE YOUR STRUGGLES, YE DESPICABLE SCUM! THERE IS NO ESCAPE! BURN, BLAST YE, AND PLAGUE THIS EARTH NO MORE...

EEEEEEEEEEYAH!!



MEANWHILE, BILL AND ANNE RAN TO THE FORWARD PART OF THE SHIP, WHERE THEY FOUND A HUGE GAP THROUGH WHICH THE SEA WAS POURING. THEY MANAGED TO MAKE THEIR WAY OUT OF THE DOOMED SHIP...

WE'RE FREE! SWIM FOR SHORE, HONEY! LUCKILY, IT ISN'T FAR!





AT LAST, SAFELY ON SHORE THEY STOOD IN AWE AND WATCHED THE FIRE BURN ITSELF OUT AS THE LAST HORRIBLE SCREAMS OF THE CREW WERE STILLED...

WHAT A NIGHTMARE! BILL, WHAT DO YOU SUPPOSE BECAME OF CAPTAIN PHINEAS?

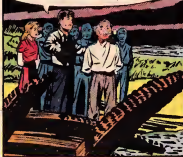
I DON'T KNOW, ANNE, BUT IT'S A CINCHE HE WILL HAVE A BETTER FATE THAN THAT CREW OF MURDERERS! I IMAGINE HIS SPIRIT IS AT PEACE NOW, WHILE BLACK TOM WENT ON TO SOMETHING FAR WORSE!



AFTER A WHILE, THE WEARY COUPLE SET OUT ALONG THE COAST IN SEARCH OF HELP! THEY WALKED ALL THAT NIGHT AND AT DAWN THEY CAME UPON A LITTLE FISHING VILLAGE! HALF-STARVED AND EXHAUSTED, THEY WERE TAKEN IN BY AN OLD FISHERMAN! THEY RESTED AT HIS HUT FOR SEVERAL DAYS, AND THEN PERSUADED HIM AND SOME OTHER FOLK FROM THE VILLAGE TO ACCOMPANY THEM TO THE WRECKED SHIP IN SEARCH OF THE PEARLS! THE TOWN-FOLK WERE SOMEWHAT DUBIOUS ABOUT A "FORTUNE IN PEARLS," BUT, CURIOUS AS TO THE WRECK, THEY WENT ALONG!

AS THEY APPROACHED THE SCENE...

WELL, THERE'S THE WRECK OF THE "FEARLESS"! IT RAN AGROUND AND BURNED THREE DAYS AGO...WE WERE LUCKY TO GET OUT ALIVE! BUT MAYBE WE CAN FIND THE PEARLS, IF THEY WEREN'T DESTROYED BY THE FIRE! THE TIDE IS OUT AND WE CAN BOARD HER!



WELL, YOUNG MAN, I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT ANY PEARLS, BUT I RECKON YOUR EXPERIENCE IN THE HURRICANE HAS LEFT YE A LITTLE WEAK IN THE HEAD! THAT OLD WRECK HAS BEEN HERE SINCE BEFORE MY GRANDFATHER WAS BORN!

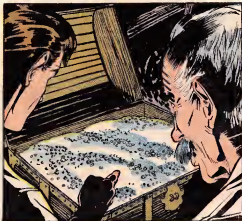


W-WHY IT CAN'T BE...W-WE WERE ON THIS SHIP! IT WAS A DERELICT AND THERE WERE...

YOU'D BETTER NOT SAY ANYTHING ABOUT GHOSTS, BILL, OR HE REALLY WILL THINK WE'RE CRAZY!



BUT TO THE OLD MAN'S ASTONISHMENT, BILL LED HIM TO THE SECRET SLIDING PANEL IN THE DEPTHS OF THE SHIP, AND...



THERE! WHAT DO YOU THINK NOW, OLD MAN? DO YOU BELIEVE OUR STORY OR NOT?

I-I DON'T KNOW! I TELL YOU THIS WRECK HAS BEEN HERE FOR NEARLY A CENTURY! AND YET YOU SAY...COME ON, YOUNG FELLER, LET'S MOVE THESE CHESTS! THE SOONER I GET OFF THIS OLD HULK, THE BETTER I'LL FEEL!



...THE END...

# Goose? or Nest?

## WHICH WILL YOU HAVE ?

**For some reason**, the goose egg stands for zero . . . nothing.

The nest egg, however, stands for a tidy sum of money, set aside for your own or your children's future.

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